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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/921,542	08/03/2001	Daniel L. Schwarz	P-5204	6838

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EXAMINER

SORKIN, DAVID L

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1723

DATE MAILED: 03/15/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/921,542

Applicant(s)

SCHWARZ ET AL.

Examiner

David L. Sorkin

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 March 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4 and 6-10 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4 and 6-10 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

Re

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1-4 and 6-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by McNeilly (US 2,974,018). Regarding claim 1, McNeilly ('018) discloses a system comprising a sample vessel (46), which is in the form of a sample vial; a panel (68) containing an opening, a stirrer (50) within said sample vessel, wherein said stirrer includes a ferrous metal (see col. 2, lines 59-64); a magnet driver (72,76), adapted to move a magnet (for example 74) proximate to an outer surface of said sample vessel to permit said magnet to impose a magnetic influence on said ferrous metal in said stirrer to move said stirrer in said sample vessel, and wherein said magnet rotates about 90 degrees with respect to the longitudinal axis of said sample vessel (see Fig. 3). Claim 1 refers to "said openings [being] tilted with respect to the horizontal such that said sample vessels when held in said opening are tilted at an angle substantially less than 90 degrees with respect to the horizontal". However, the references to "the horizontal" do not establish orientation with respect to a claimed element, but instead "horizontal" is (based upon the dictionary definitions applicant cites in applicants 04 March 2005 remarks) an orientation relative to the horizon (which in turn is defined by the surface of the Earth or potentially an outer space body such as the Moon, Mars etc.). Therefore,

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apparatus claim 1 is anticipated if the prior art device is *capable* of satisfying the intended orientation with respect the unclaimed element. If for example “supports 12” of the device of McNeilly ('018) were placed upon a sloped surface, the intended orientation of the opening and vessel would be achieved. In summary McNeilly ('018) discloses all the positively recited structural elements of claim 1 and would be capable of being operated and oriented in the manner recited in the claim. Regarding claim 2, said magnet driver comprises a magnet shaft assembly (76) having said magnet coupled thereto; and a motor (72), adapted to move said magnet shaft assembly to move said magnet proximate to said outer surface and away from said outer surface. Regarding claim 3, the shaft assembly (76) is rotatable and said motor (72) is capable of performing the act discussed in claim 3. Regarding claim 4, the reference discloses an electric motor which intrinsically involves magnetic coupling to the shaft. Claims 6, 7, 9 and 10 further discuss what the claimed device is intend to do; however, “apparatus claims cover what a device *is*, not what a device *does*” (emphasis in original) *Hewlett-Packard Co. v. Bausch & Lomb Inc.* 15 USPQ2d 1525, 1528 (Fed. Cir. 1990). Claim 8 only discusses a magnet which is not recited as part of the claimed apparatus and therefore does not further structurally limit the claimed apparatus.

Response to Arguments

3. Initially, the examiner notes that magnetic stirrers are recognized in the art (see US 2002/0118594 paragraph [0010]) as having outer-space, low-gravity, no-gravity and extraterrestrial applications. Therefor, it is especially important to construe the instant claims accurately as to any limitations requiring the claimed stirrer to be in combination

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with a particular celestial body such as the Earth, and in such combination any particular required relative orientation of the subcombination elements (such as the Earth and the stirrer or portions thereof). However, the examiner considers that the broadest reasonable interpretation of the claims is that the claims are directed to the subcombination stirrer and any reference to "horizontal" is a matter of intended use.

4. The examiner does not disagree with the definitions (horizontal meaning parallel to the horizon) applicant cites; the examiner simply does not consider the "horizon" to be an element of the claimed structure. Recitation of the orientation of claimed elements with respect to unclaimed elements is not a structural limitation, but an intended use.

Conclusion

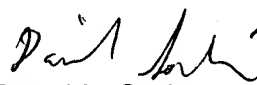
5. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to David L. Sorkin whose telephone number is 571-272-1148. The examiner can normally be reached on 9:00 -5:30 Mon.-Fri..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Wanda L. Walker can be reached on 571-272-1151. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


David L. Sorkin
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1723

DLS